



Western Regional Maintenance Operations and Facility Support

Operation Review

November 26, 2007

Western Regional Maintenance is not meeting the full needs of its customers:

- ***J. Iverson Riddle Neuro-Medical Treatment Center (JIRNMTC)***
- ***Broughton Hospital***
- ***North Carolina School for the Deaf (NCSD)***

Executive Summary

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) consolidated maintenance operations in Morganton without developing a detailed plan specific to the location. The resulting organization does not meet the full needs of its customers and has alienated many senior employees.

In 2002, the North Carolina General Assembly directed DHHS to develop a plan to consolidate maintenance activities at three facilities in Morganton, North Carolina. During the same year, the Governor's Commission to Promote Government Efficiency and Savings on State Spending was charged with identifying "long-run efficiencies." In its final report, published in December 2002, the Commission recommended the consolidation of administrative and support functions in areas of high concentration of state facilities and specifically mentioned the plan being developed for the Morganton area.

In 2003, DHHS began consolidation of its maintenance operations in the Morganton area, instituting a single budget in August, and completing implementation in early 2004. DHHS created an organization to manage the consolidated maintenance operation, Western Regional Maintenance (WRM).

Members of the General Assembly expressed concerns about the implementation of the consolidation and requested Fiscal Research Division (FRD) conduct a review of the WRM operation.

The review team developed several major findings:

- Western Regional Maintenance has a talented, dedicated staff working diligently to provide maintenance for the three facilities.
- Most facilities' management does not believe consolidation has improved their maintenance support.
- Detailed planning would have made consolidation more effective.
- Consolidation, as implemented, has adversely impacted the morale of long-term employees.
- There is no compelling evidence that consolidation has increased efficiency or effectiveness of maintenance services.

The FRD team developed a list of options for consideration, based on their findings:

- Develop an organization that is more responsive to customers by flattening the management structure and requiring WRM to report to a local facility director.
- Make a concerted effort to improve employee relations by reviewing pay, better-explaining hiring decisions, and involving maintenance personnel in planning WRM operations.
- Improve efficiency of operations by making repair and replacement parts more accessible, planning work orders to minimize travel, and recognizing employees' contributions and ideas.